S05308: Teaching Uncomfortable History: The Doctrine of Discovery with Holly Rine

Jordan Loewen-Colón (00:07):

Hello, and welcome to the Mapping the Doctrine of Discovery podcast. The producers of this podcast would like to acknowledge with respect the Onondaga Nation, firekeepers of the Haudenosaunee, the indigenous peoples on whose ancestral lands Syracuse University now stands. And now introducing your hosts, Phil Arnold and Sandy Bigtree.

Philip P. Arnold (00:30):

Welcome back everyone to Mapping the Doctrine of Discovery. My name is Philip Arnold. I'm a professor in Religion and Native American Indigenous Studies and the founding director of the Skä·noñh-Great Law of Peace Center at Syracuse University. And I'm here with.

Jordan Loewen-Colón (00:51):

I'm Sandy Bigtree, a citizen of the Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne, and I was on the planning committee of the Skä·noñh Center, the founding committee. I also am on the board of the Indigenous Values Initiative, and thank you all for tuning in again.

Philip P. Arnold (01:10):

This podcast is sponsored by Henry Luce Foundation. And today, we're very fortunate to have a friend of ours, Professor Holly Rine at Le Moyne University, and also on the collaborative of the Skä·noñh-Great Law of Peace Center. Holly has been studying in the area of the Doctrine of Discovery and doing historical work locally, but I'm going to have her introduce herself to the listening public. Holly, welcome.

Holly A. Rine (01:49):

Thank you very much. I'm really pleased to be here. Yes, I'm Holly Rine, I am an associate professor of history at Le Moyne College. And as Phil said, I'm also on the academic collaborative and of the Skä·noñh Center, and I'm just thrilled to be here and have this conversation. It's such a great service, I think, to so many people who just aren't as familiar with the doctrine as they should be.

Philip P. Arnold (02:18):

Exactly where I wanted to start, Holly, because you teach at a Jesuit university, Jesuit college. Jesuit university-

Holly A. Rine (02:19):

College.

Philip P. Arnold (02:27):

College.

Holly A. Rine (02:27):

We're still college for the moment.

Philip P. Arnold (02:28):

You're still a college, but you're D1. So I don't know, it confuses me. But ... Yeah. So you're teaching at a Jesuit college, and interestingly enough, there's a lot of Jesuit institutions that are very interested in this legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery, perhaps more than other Catholic institutions. That's just my impression from the outside. And I know you've been working on this for a long time, but how do you approach it at a Jesuit college? How do you think your students receive this information about the Doctrine of Discovery? And I'd be just generally interested in your experience.

Holly A. Rine (03:11):

Yeah. So I've been at Le Moyne now, this is my 19th year. And I will say myself, I was really quite unfamiliar with the Doctrine of Discovery. When I came, Mary MacDonald, may she rest in peace, former religion studies professor, one of your colleagues as well, really brought me in to this discussion. And ... So it's been a process for me as well. And through these 19 years, really discovering ... The students don't know the history, very few. And as I learned it, and at a Jesuit school where we talk about social justice, it was like, well, this becomes our duty, our responsibility. If we are saying we are a Jesuit school and we are following in this history and tradition of social justice, well, what does that exactly mean before social justice became a thing?

Philip P. Arnold (04:16):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (04:17):

And we have so much at Le Moyne that harkens back to the relationship with the Onondagas. On our ... The name Le Moyne, Simon Le Moyne as the Jesuit who came to this area. And you ask a student who Simon Le Moyne was, and oftentimes, well, he founded the college in 1946. Well, no, he did not. So it really became important to me, and I'm making slow inroads into having students understand exactly what was happening here. But I was actually the first person they hired to teach Native American history at all as well at Le Moyne.

Sandy Bigtree (05:07):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (05:09):

So I said, the Doctor of Discovery has become, for me, more than just this is a really interesting area to teach. This is a responsibility to say if we are parts of a Jesuit tradition and part of this particular history, we need to know about it. And the students, extremely receptive, shocked, really, when we start. So I've had opportunities, it's not college wide, but in my particular classes, we do these projects and looking at the doctrine and looking at then Le Moyne and looking at the history, how the history's been told versus this counternarrative. And I love our students because they're like, "No, we need to do these projects and people need to know this." And they've come up with some really interesting projects with QR codes and everything to help educate their peers.

(06:24):

So I've done a project, particularly, we started doing a public history program here at Le Moyne, so an introduction to public history. So I was like, "Well, here's our chance." So we take a look at the Doctrine of Discovery, and we take a look at this history, and I allow students to come up with their own projects. And how do you tell then incoming students about the history that they are now a part of? If you're

going to say you're a Le Moyne dolphin, you are a part of this. And they've done wonderfully from podcasts. They created their own podcast to, like I said, tours so you could take your phone and do the QR codes and order to. So those who have been introduced to the doctrine have realized their own responsibility as a Le Moyne student.

Sandy Bigtree (07:22):

Well, we live in a very vibrant part of the world. When the Jesuits came into this territory, they recorded the first histories that were written about the Haudenosaunee, and that's how England learned about the Haudenosaunee was through what the Jesuits were writing and publishing all over Europe. And they came into this continent through the Doctrine of Discovery to Christianize and install a patriarchy among a matrifocal, matrilineal culture, which permeated all of the Americas, frankly. So today, we still have the Onondaga Nation organized around their matrilineal clan system. Then we had this French fort that we were trying, all of us were trying, to work to repurpose into the telling of this history people know nothing about, as you indicated at the beginning of this podcast.

(08:23):

And so it was quite a venture because we had great opposition, and a lot of it was coming from Le Moyne in the beginning. They did not want us repurposing the French fort and telling a different perspective of what actually happened in Haudenosaunee territory. So you were part of this collaborative as well, but you were right in the thick of it [inaudible 00:08:48] ...

Philip P. Arnold (08:47):

Right.

Sandy Bigtree (08:48):

... in Le Moyne.

Philip P. Arnold (08:49):

I have to say that you were fearless pushing back against some of the Jesuits in your college, insisting that they listen rather than preach some colleagues in your own department. So I mean, I think that was really a lesson for us to see you take on your own institution.

Sandy Bigtree (09:18):

Brave woman.

Holly A. Rine (09:19):

Yeah. And again, it was ... I look at Daniel Berrigan, one of the Jesuit many people are familiar with, big social activists, and one of his statements was know where you stand and stand there.

Philip P. Arnold (09:36):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (09:40):

And it's been really eye-opening with these conversations, I think, as people come around, it's slow. But one of the Ignatian principles of education is through Ignatian principles of conversation, which is to

truly sit and listen. And in many respects, it goes back to Haudenosaunee ideas of how you come to a decision. Unfortunately, in the modern world, many in the Jesuit fold, it's, well, no, we have decisions to make and we've got to move forward. So adapting that has been, I think, very beneficial primarily for the students instead. I'm not going to fight fights necessarily that I-

Philip P. Arnold (10:27):

Right. You've got to pick them.

Holly A. Rine (10:28):

Yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (10:28):

Well, there's a reason. The first peace council, the first movement in the United States occurred in Syracuse, and the Barragans were very much a part of that movement as well.

Holly A. Rine (10:42):

Yes.

Sandy Bigtree (10:43):

So it's also the heart of Haudenosaunee territory, the heart of the Confederacy, and spreading the great binding peace around the world. So they were definitely influenced by all of that.

Philip P. Arnold (10:56):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (10:57):

Oh, yes. And when students are introduced to that concept as well. So I was like, "Yes, we have American democracy because, yes, I just finished teaching a class in the American Revolution." But as I come back for my Native American history class, where we're going to go deeper into, really, when we look at representative government, when we look at true ideals of democracy, you look at the great law of peace, and it was done earlier and in my perspective with the voices of women and really looking at this idea of consensus building better, it was done better. And it's ... I said, students have been quite responsive when you start really looking at the evidence. And Sandy, I mean, you talked about the Jesuit relations. I mean, those are the sources we have for historians. We need the Jesuit relations, those are the sources we have.

Sandy Bigtree (11:57):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (11:58):

And one of the biggest challenges is teaching students how to read those sources.

Philip P. Arnold (12:03):

Yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (12:03):

Well, there's-

Philip P. Arnold (12:04):

I wanted to ask about that because that goes right to the heart of doing history.

Holly A. Rine (12:11):

Yes, right. And you can't have history without the written sources, but we do exercises. I was like, if we look at these sources, the Jesuit relations without any critical eye, oh my, there's a history we cannot tell. And unfortunately, that has happened. It's like, well, here's the written sources and we're going to take that as gospel truth with the Jesuits gospel truth. But again, once we start thinking about, and students pushing, I'm like, "Why were they written? Who were they written for? What was the purpose?" And what is it now that we can see in these relations? So when they talk about Le Moyne and his speech, when he shows up at Onondaga and he ... Oh, that story of him, you can just see him walking around and pronouncing and this great performance, and according to him, all the Onondagas were just applauding. And this is ... Oh, this is beautiful, this is wonderful. Can we get enough? And to really start saying, "Okay, well, here's events that are happening in the world." Why might ... Even if we do have Onondaga approval of some of these statements, what might be going on here?

Philip P. Arnold (13:44):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (13:44):

Are they really like, "Oh, please come and build your chapels." And once you really start thinking critically, knowing more of the context and knowing about the great law of peace and understanding then the Doctrine of Discovery and how these ideas come to take over, students get it.

Philip P. Arnold (13:44):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (13:44):

They-

Sandy Bigtree (13:44):

They sure do.

Holly A. Rine (14:11):

They get it, but it is a process. And that's speech that Le Moyne gave, and I crack up, too, because we do have Simon's Pub on campus and we have ... It's a painting supposed to be of Simon Le Moyne and I just crack because it looks like the Marlboro Man. And I was like, "We're still promoting this idea, this version of the vitality and the, oh, such a charismatic figure." And he may have been, but these words are ... We need them. Those are our sources, but we need to be careful, careful, careful with how we take a look at them [inaudible 00:14:59].

Philip P. Arnold (14:59):

Well, yeah, they have definite agenda in publishing those ... Yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (15:04):

So they can continue to be funded by the European monarch to ...

Holly A. Rine (15:09):

Exactly.

Sandy Bigtree (15:09):

... penetrate this land. And there was only ... It's not like this was the first time the Onondaga met the Jesuits. They were aware, they were north of the ...

Philip P. Arnold (15:22):

St. Lawrence.

Sandy Bigtree (15:24):

... St. Lawrence penetrating the wind debt and they were chaining women in the forest until they would accept to take vows of Christianity and be subservient to their husbands. It was so brutal those first 30 years the Jesuits were up there. Don't think for a moment Onondaga didn't already know about this.

Holly A. Rine (15:45):

Oh, yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (15:46):

So when the French fort narrative that had been teaching this community about these first relations were about the Onondaga asking them to, "Please come and Christianize us." You can see it was pure propaganda, [inaudible 00:16:03] the spirit in which those Jesuit relations were written. But there are little nuggets of-

Philip P. Arnold (16:10):

Because we have other evidence, of course. We have the evidence of the land grant, essentially.

Sandy Bigtree (16:17):

Arriving with.

Philip P. Arnold (16:17):

Yeah, arriving with this land grant.

Holly A. Rine (16:19):

Oh, yeah.

Philip P. Arnold (16:23):

A deed, essentially, to 600 square miles of land, which isn't in the relations, of course, but that's another piece of evidence of really the Doctrine of Discovery. So those ... Just a few years after Le Moyne, they're coming up and setting up shop, knowing that they're taking and appropriating land.

Holly A. Rine (16:45):

Yeah.

Philip P. Arnold (16:46):

So the flourishes of speeches and all the good deeds that are presented in the relations are not always backed up by even the written evidence.

Holly A. Rine (17:01):

No.

Sandy Bigtree (17:02):

Well, the relations are talking about this culture that live in peace and they never scold their children or hit them. The men respect the women. The women respect the men. They have plentiful gardens of food and crops, and these heathens need to understand the power of God and that they sin. These people are sinners, but they don't even have a concept of sin. I mean-

Philip P. Arnold (17:02):

Those are all negatives.

Sandy Bigtree (17:02):

This is all written.

Philip P. Arnold (17:02):

Those are all the negatives of relations, yeah.

Holly A. Rine (17:39):

And it's interesting because I think people then become more open to these ideas. I think once ... What happened at Georgetown University.

Philip P. Arnold (17:48):

Yeah, right.

Holly A. Rine (17:49):

The selling of slaves. So they had this enslaved population. Students were just like, "What?"

Philip P. Arnold (17:55):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (17:55):

What do you mean? That can't have been social justice. It's like, social justice is new.

Philip P. Arnold (17:56):

It's new.

Holly A. Rine (18:03):

Right? But we take a little bit closer look at what the Jesuits again were asking. It's like, okay, it's okay to sell these enslaved people to Louisiana parish plantations as long as they continue to get their catechism.

Philip P. Arnold (18:23):

Yeah, right.

Holly A. Rine (18:24):

As long as the Catholic education and that the sacraments are available to them and they're going to have Catholic instruction. I was like, "So the goal wasn't social justice here on earth. The goal is, yeah, we're going to convert you and you're going to have this wonderful experience in afterworld you don't necessarily believe in or want." So I was like, "We have to take a look." Just because we talk about social justice now doesn't mean we talked about that then. So watching Georgetown really deal with that.

Philip P. Arnold (19:02):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (19:04):

And then when we take a look and we see more colleges and universities focusing on their history with indigenous peoples as well. Students were like, "Okay, yeah, we are a part of something bigger here as well," which is always a trick getting students at Le Moyne to understand that history didn't just happen elsewhere. History happened here. Very significant things happen here that are very much connected. So just because it happened here doesn't mean it's insignificant.

Philip P. Arnold (19:40):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (19:40):

It happened here and it's really in a crucial part of a larger picture, and we're not separate from it. So we talk about really ... Indigenous ideas of history are much more ...

Sandy Bigtree (19:57):

Relevant.

Holly A. Rine (19:57):

... great ... Relevant. They're part of today as opposed to, I think, so many of ... Again, history happened over there or some other time, some other place. And I was like, "No, now you are a part of this story." What do you do with this story? What is your role? You're a part of it now. You're not just studying it. You are a part.

Philip P. Arnold (20:25):

And it's not like it was just in the past, right?

Sandy Bigtree (20:25):

It's relevant.

Philip P. Arnold (20:25):

I know, right.

Sandy Bigtree (20:29):

But you talk about social justice. Well, I said when the Jesuits first came into Wendat territory, they claimed they Christianized the whole nation within 30 years. And yet there were orators going to Europe, critiquing the greatest thinkers in Europe at the time, who professed to be practicing equality and social justice and all the things you're talking about, but they're saying you're only equal and just under the rule of your monarch. And we're being fed these same narratives today. That's what Putin's telling his people. You're all free and equal. Seriously? And we're shifting in that direction ourselves in this country. So you've got to be made aware of the seriousness of these discussions.

Philip P. Arnold (21:23):

And they haven't gone away. The past is not past, it's present and part of our future, I think. I mean, this is from Adam, our producer. I want to get this in because he asks, "What does the Catholic theology of the priests who think conversion and Catholic practice of the enslaved folks was doing for them, for the priests or for the church?" I think it's a good question given your comments on Georgetown, for example. I mean ...

Holly A. Rine (21:58):

Oh, yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (22:00):

What does the catechism have to do with holding these people in bondage? How does that liberate them? Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (22:10):

Yeah. I mean, the idea of being held in bondage on Earth, that's fine. And really, one of the goals of the Jesuits in the 18th century, martyrdom, everybody was looking for suffering on Earth for the greater glory of God.

Philip P. Arnold (22:37):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (22:38):

So again, social justice doesn't fit into that because it's better for you to die. It's okay for you to be held in bondage as long as you are maintaining Catholic practice and maintaining the sacraments, and the priests are the ones responsible for making sure that that happens, right?

Philip P. Arnold (23:07):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (23:07):

So duty done.

Jordan Loewen-Colón (23:10):

Do you need help catching up on today's topic or do you want to learn more about the resources mentioned? If so, please check our website at podcast.doctrineofdiscovery.org for more information. And if you like this episode, review it on Apple, Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts. And now back to the conversation.

Sandy Bigtree (23:10):

Yes.

Philip P. Arnold (23:30):

You were present at our conversations with David McCallum, Father McCallum, at Le Moyne, and we were at it for three years or more, I think, with the Onondaga there at Le Moyne. And I remember one exchange where we were talking about the martyrs, actually, and their names on your ...

Sandy Bigtree (23:55):

Dorms.

Philip P. Arnold (23:56):

... dorms, I think.

Holly A. Rine (23:56):

Yeah.

Philip P. Arnold (23:58):

And I think it was Jake Edwards asked, "Well, what is a martyr?" And they explained somebody was spreading the gospel among non-Christian people, among native people. I don't think they used the word heathen to be ...

Holly A. Rine (24:16):

No, no.

Philip P. Arnold (24:18):

But then Jake said, "Oh, you mean invaders," which completely flips the script. I mean, it was a revelation to me because ... And I'm not Catholic, of course, but martyrs only operate in a certain worldview, in a framework, and maybe a historical one. But to me, that was a revelation. It quieted the room for a while, I think.

Holly A. Rine (24:52):

Yes, yes, yes, it did. I mean, I just also remember, I believe at one point, I'm not sure if it was David or someone, but just saying that they were looking for reconciliation at this point. And was it Jake who was like, "No."

Philip P. Arnold (25:08):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (25:08):

Not now. Not in our lifetimes. Not going to happen. It may have been Oren. I don't ... But I remember that exchange extremely well and I talk about that with my students as well.

Philip P. Arnold (25:23):

Wow. Great.

Holly A. Rine (25:24):

That this is something that is not ... It's not like, okay, all right, yeah, we get you. Great. Fabulous. I understand now.

Philip P. Arnold (25:35):

Next.

Holly A. Rine (25:35):

Yeah, let's move on. And that really hits home for them that they are part of this.

Sandy Bigtree (25:46):

Right. Maybe we can talk about reconciliation when we can dip a cup in any stream and drink freely from it without being poisoned.

Philip P. Arnold (25:55):

Right. And that gets to your-

Sandy Bigtree (25:56):

You can begin the conversation about reconciliation.

Philip P. Arnold (26:00):

That gets to your-

Sandy Bigtree (26:01):

There need to be changes before we can arrive at that conversation.

Philip P. Arnold (26:07):

Yeah, as Adam also interjects. Oren says, "There can be no reconciliation when there is no point to which one can be conciled." Strange word, but you can't be reconciled until you can be conciled.

Speaker 5 (26:27):

And to jump in there, what Oren is pointing out is the word reconciliation is a return to when things were going good, when there was a good time. When spouses reconcile, it's recognizing the good times.

Holly A. Rine (26:42):

Yeah.

Speaker 5 (26:43):

Where in the 500 years of history is the good times? Where is that point to which one can be conciled?

Philip P. Arnold (26:49):

Right. Sandy's point gets us to this article you wrote. Maybe the title page. Yes. Onondaga Lake, sacred space, contested space. And it's a remarkable piece. And I think what you're trying to do, you can tell us what you're trying to do, but from my point of view, you're trying to localize history, you're trying to give it some local importance, but also thinking about the environmental impacts and other kinds of impacts that history can tell a story or weave a story of a place. And it's difficult past in a way that helps us revisit where we are. But you tell us what you wanted to accomplish with this piece.

Holly A. Rine (27:54):

Yeah, there's a few things. I'm really, again, focusing on local that, yes, I want us to take a look at this bit of local history. And when we look at Onondaga Lake, the story of it is primarily the modern story of the pollution. It's like, well, there's more to it as well. And if we want to get to the point of, as Sandy said, it'd be great if we could actually dip our cups in there. It'd be great if you could dip your toe in there, I mean, at this point in time.

Philip P. Arnold (28:30):

Right, yeah.

Holly A. Rine (28:32):

That this ... It didn't have to be this way. And this is what I try to tell students with history all the time. It wasn't just a set of things that have to unfold in a particular way. We make choices. Choices were made that got us to this point. But if you look at that original history of the lake, the sacred nature of this particular place, and we, as Americans, talk about the importance of sacred places, and I talk about that in the article as well. Joe Biden talked about on January 6th with the attacks on the Capitol that a sacred place of government of founding was attacked. It's like, well, that happened here.

Philip P. Arnold (29:21):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (29:22):

That happened at Onondaga Lake. We don't recognize that, but it did. Maybe if we can recognize this at one point, this gets to the conciled part.

Philip P. Arnold (29:37):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (29:37):

Maybe we can look at that bit of history and say, "There is another way." There is another approach, and this approach may take another 400 years.

Philip P. Arnold (29:52):

Right. Well-

Holly A. Rine (29:53):

But it is something that we can really take a look at and think about.

Philip P. Arnold (29:58):

I think the value from our point of view is the value of the 250 celebration next year is that we can really reassess where democracy has been inspired and maybe think about ... It's always a standard practice of the Haudenosaunee to include other non-human beings in their democratic processes. So this radical democratic process does have the water in it. It does have animals and trees and the land and things like that, which is something that, of course, our founding fathers completely neglected the role of the non-human persons. And-

Holly A. Rine (30:49):

More than human.

Philip P. Arnold (30:50):

More than human. And, of course, women and others. But it's not finished, I guess, is what you're saying.

Holly A. Rine (31:01):

It's not finished. I mean ... So we've made choices. We can continue to make choices, and we have other models to look at, especially, as you said, this time, there's a lot of ... Just finished the American Revolution course. And one of the things we were talking about is the future of the American Revolution. What does this look like?

Philip P. Arnold (31:22):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (31:23):

And students were really thoughtful about really the challenges that we're facing at this point in time, many of them talking about environmental issues and the fear of backsliding and going right back into deregulation and what can happen to the environment. And it's like, okay, we're at this pivot point again of, where are we heading? And now we're in this time of social justice where we had the late Pope actually wrote an encyclical dealing with the environment. So we've switched these ideas of what land and water and the non-human animals, their value no longer necessarily just economic to subdue the earth, but now, oh, wait, we live amongst, we are part, we are responsible again. So I think we are at that moment and at a Jesuit institution, I think, of saying, "Okay, we can switch this view and we can

look back on that doctrine of discovery and we can look back at that great law of peace and that clash, really." You had two completely different world views.

(32:55):

Well, here we are at a moment. We can make a decision. We can make a decision. What will those decisions be moving forward as we look to the history that has informed us and informed this area, whether we look at Onondaga Lake, whether we look at the Sullivan-Clinton campaigns during the American Revolution, which, again, comes as a shock to a lot of students. They don't know it, that George Washington ordered this attack into the area that really the goal was, of course, to eliminate the Haudenosaunee and to take that land and those resources. And it's like, okay, we're at a moment. What do we do with that? And I think it's a really both exciting and fearful time.

Sandy Bigtree (33:54):

Well, both are at play. It is fearful and it is exciting. And you talk about Onondaga Lake. Let's talk about the Erie Canal, our first encounter where we're going to share in the river of life, the Two Row Wampum, the Haudenosaunee present to the Dutch. We're going to share in the river of life down parallel paths and not interfere with one another. Well, you have to first determine your perspective of life. Is it about your relationship with the natural world as the Haudenosaunee see it or is this life the spirit of an economic growth right through a New York state with what was to follow? And that's the Erie Canal. It's artificial waterway. We're hearing talk right now about Micron associating with being the present-day Erie Canal of New York state.

Philip P. Arnold (34:52):

Right.

Sandy Bigtree (34:54):

And that's a flag. That is terrifying knowing what the Erie Canal did to the Haudenosaunee throughout this land, disrupting this whole ecological system [inaudible 00:35:08] ...

Holly A. Rine (35:07):

And with Micron.

Sandy Bigtree (35:09):

... and terror were right at that moment. You're right.

Holly A. Rine (35:13):

And with Micron. And again, why are they looking here? It's water resources.

Philip P. Arnold (35:18):

Water. Fresh water.

Holly A. Rine (35:20):

And that's a fun thing with students as well. I was like, we don't understand the crucial nature of what because we have so much of it here.

Philip P. Arnold (35:29):

Right.

Sandy Bigtree (35:29):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (35:30):

I mean, half the time, I've moved to Syracuse and there's a hole in my basement. I was like, "Why is there a hole in the floor of my basement? I've never seen that before." And they're like, "Oh, then Syracuse, that's the difference between having a basement or a pool."

Philip P. Arnold (35:46):

Or a lake.

Holly A. Rine (35:46):

Yes, in your house. So that role of water, which, again ... I mean, so the past week, it hasn't stopped. And so much of the world, that is such a focal point where it's not here in the same way, but Micron is here because of the water. What is that going to do as well? So, yeah, Sandy, that whole idea of the Erie Canal, yes, this is going to be a new economic revolution for this area. They're here because of the water resources. The Jesuits were really interested in the salts.

Philip P. Arnold (36:26):

Yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (36:28):

How do we talk about sacred space?

Holly A. Rine (36:32):

And here we go again, what choices? And even with the aquarium, which just continues to ... I was like, "We're going to build an aquarium," that I was like, "What to show what the fish who should have been living in the lake look like [inaudible 00:36:46]." What are the choices that we make?

Philip P. Arnold (36:55):

No, I mean, I think what you've done in this article is set up our thinking about the long duration, the long duration of Onondaga Lake from what we call prehistory, although it's just history. I mean, it's just history. I mean ... Because the Onondaga are there and they're telling us about this history. And that's what we were trying to do at the Skä·noñh Center is trying to give people a sense of values so that it can set up a conversation, set up our students to think about what will be our future.

Sandy Bigtree (37:39):

And to leave with a critical eye about what's happening around them.

Holly A. Rine (37:43):

Yes. And ... Yes. I mean, that is ... So from how do we read the sources? Everything ... Yes, you have to ask those questions and you have to be open-minded. Like I said, when I got here in 2006, I wasn't that familiar with the Doctrine of Discovery, and it was me sitting and listening, just shutting my mouth. And in conversation with the Onondagas, I took that Jesuit principle of, listen, don't come to conclusions until you listen and learn. And I listened and I think I learned quite a bit. And it's gotten me to ... This was after my PhD. I got my PhD. I know it all. Woo-hoo. God, no. And that's another thing I hope my students really get out of that is that this is a continuing ... I'm going to teach you things that are going to be challenged and should be challenged. And you don't just sit there and say, "Well, Dr. Rine said that, therefore it's true."

Philip P. Arnold (38:56):

No, they don't do that anymore. They don't take what you say as gospel [inaudible 00:39:02].

Holly A. Rine (39:02):

At Le Moyne, they still do. I told them I was going to start lying one day just to see what happens.

Philip P. Arnold (39:08):

Yeah, just use the strategy of the Jesuits 17th century joke. I mean, of course ... I mean, I was always interested, and I have a similar history to yours, and in that, I really started learning about the Doctrine of Discovery in the early 2000s, we'll say around 2004, '05 when we started to get to know Steve Newcomb, for example, and his work. But, of course, before, I was always interested. If you're teaching Native America, you're always aware of the contact situation. It might be Manifest Destiny, it might be just outright colonialism or conquest or the Indian Wars or wherever you are in that history. But the Doctrine of Discovery, I guess, maybe as a category encapsulates that kind of mythology that has driven the American culture so much. I mean, that's the way I think about it, that I've always been working on it. But then this idea of the Doctrine of Discovery and the specificity of the documents coming from the 15th century or earlier, just that galvanizes everything.

Holly A. Rine (40:39):

Yes. And to look at really how that continues then through areas that students are more familiar with.

Philip P. Arnold (40:49):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (40:49):

Like Cherokee removal and the removal period, and the court cases that students are vaguely familiar this happened, but to really look into that idea of the legal march here. So we talk about the United States for a country of laws. Well, where do these laws then come from? And this was one part of my learning process. So, yeah, I knew Johnson v. McIntosh, I knew about all of these things. I'm like, "Oh, wait, this is a continuation of that doctrine then."

Philip P. Arnold (41:32):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (41:33):

That legal ... I win because it's the law. I win because it's the legal document that says I own this land. And to say that in US law, that came from Canon law that came from the Pope, which at the time was the law, and then how it moves into US law. So we really view that all the way up to, of course, the Sherrill Case, the Sherrill-Oneida case. And students are blown away when they not only read, but that footnote and talking about basically that the Oneidas, it's too late for them to claim the land. And it's ... I wish I had the quote in front of me, but [inaudible 00:42:26] ... What's that?

Sandy Bigtree (41:33):

Latches, right?

Holly A. Rine (42:26):

That this is basically part of how it's been done. This is the law, this is the Doctrine of Discovery. And then students realize that was Ruth Bader Ginsburg who wrote it, and they're like, "What? What? No." This becomes that crucial element then of that legal nature, which then gets us back to the great law of peace, which isn't going to necessarily be recognized as law.

Philip P. Arnold (43:03):

Adam has it here. Doctrine of Discovery, fee titled to the lands occupied by Indians when the colonists arrived, became vested in the sovereign. First, the discovering European nation and later the original states, and then the United States. That's Ruth Bader Ginsburg first footnote. Yeah. And for me, in religion, I mean, religion, we talk about sacred places all the time. We talk about all of these theological elements, but the Doctrine of Discovery brings together religion, [inaudible 00:43:43] law.

Holly A. Rine (43:44):

Yep.

Philip P. Arnold (43:45):

With textual, exegesis, historical work. It brings together all these different people, environmentalists, indigenous peoples. It seems to me it has a galvanizing effect on bringing all kinds of different academics together with indigenous people around a shared concern. And that's what I think the power of this is really and why this is mapping the Doctrine of Discovery, because just all over the place, it goes with so many different areas.

Sandy Bigtree (44:22):

It's a way through it. I mean, being an academic, indigenous people have held such distrust because history has been written through the Doctrine of Discovery and taking control of these narratives and manipulating the future. So you talk about experts and how academics are not so much seen as the definitive experts anymore, because when you incorporate the Doctrine of Discovery into interpreting these ancient texts and primary sources, you're beginning to see a fault line there that's racking open. So you have to question the experts. You had to study to become a professor. And everybody, it's all beginning to erode. And it's a good thing because it has to be reconstructed. You do want people having a critical mind. Nobody knows the definitive truth here of what's been recorded.

Holly A. Rine (45:27):

Yeah. And that's really one of the things I push with my students is in the classes, I'm not so concerned about the facts that you know when you come out, but I want you to look at those facts that are presented to you, the history that's presented to you, and just stop, take a moment and really think and come up with your own questions.

Philip P. Arnold (45:51):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (45:52):

So a lot of times, it's like, I want to know what your questions are about the source. I want to know what it is that you see that makes you either say, "Oh, I didn't know that," or, "Wait a second, time out. This sounds wrong." It's okay for you to say, "This sounds wrong," and ask that question.

Philip P. Arnold (46:15):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (46:17):

That's the real key. And it's a hard thing for students to learn, to-

Philip P. Arnold (46:25):

Relationship becomes more collaborative between the professor and the student.

Sandy Bigtree (46:29):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (46:30):

Yes.

Sandy Bigtree (46:30):

It's more regenerative.

Philip P. Arnold (46:33):

Yeah. I mean, also, we have other texts as well. We have Wampum Belts, for example. You have the Hiawatha Belt in your article. You discuss the founding of the league and the Confederacy, but we also have the Remembrance Belt, which, for the Onondaga anyway, details that relationship between the Haudenosaunee, or sorry, the Onondaga and the Jesuits in the 17th century. But as far as I know, nobody's really put that down in a way. I mean, it's been discussed, but a Wampum Belt functions fundamentally differently than a text. So it becomes a much more collaborative exercise to be able to interpret a Wampum Belt or to have these conversations of what really happened there. Have, for example, Oren Lyons talking about that Remembrance Belt, and he did it at Le Moyne, as I recall, in a presentation there talking about the Two Row, talking about these Wampum Belts, that then became ... It's a revelation for people doing this history. Gives them another angle.

Holly A. Rine (48:02):

And that's one of the things is I use the Wampum Belts in teaching because most of the students are like, "Oh, it's just a game of telephone or whatever."

Philip P. Arnold (48:12):

Exactly.

Sandy Bigtree (48:12):

Oh.

Holly A. Rine (48:13):

No. And they're like, "Well, things change." I was like ... To try to get them to understand. And again, that's the present nature of history. It's like there is an understanding. This isn't just the documents that we look at in the archives. This is a living piece of understanding that goes beyond, in many respects, how we look at written sources.

Philip P. Arnold (48:41):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (48:42):

So it's really difficult ... I mean, it was difficult for me to wrap my head around. And it can be really challenging for them, but in the end, they at least understand it to the point of how these visual element, the Wampum Belts, or if we're looking at Lakota winter counts and how we understand these and how they really continue to live.

Philip P. Arnold (49:09):

Right.

Holly A. Rine (49:12):

Yeah, it's one of the big challenges. But students, again, I love them when they're open to those ideas. And the Two Row is ... Yeah, once they see that, and also you said the Treaty of Canandaigua and the Washington Belt there, that blows their minds in ways of like, "Wait, you had Washington tried to destroy the Haudenosaunee, and now there's a treaty, and how does all this go together?" And I was like, "And not only is there this treaty, but every November 11th, go to Canandaigua, go to Canandaigua." Again, it's alive. It is not in the past. This is a crucial element of present identity as well.

Philip P. Arnold (50:12):

Yeah, it's thrilling. It's really thrilling.

Sandy Bigtree (50:14):

It's a different way of remembrance ...

Philip P. Arnold (50:17):

Yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (50:18):

... when history is more factual and there's all these dates and linear way of thinking, but the Haudenosaunee don't think that way. It's not relational. Sid says you cannot experience peace unless you're in proper relationship with the natural world. This is all about relationships. The Two Row is about relationships. The Canandaigua Treaty is about relationships. And when those are a way of living, you do remember those relationships better than you would remember written facts.

Philip P. Arnold (50:50):

Also, going back to your article, just ... Also those are ... They're in the land, right? All those remembrances and the Wampum Belts are connected to the lake or to these places. And that's another way that they remember really literally putting it together.

Sandy Bigtree (51:13):

So much is encoded in the natural world when this plant goes to seed or when the fish are jumping in their streams.

Philip P. Arnold (51:23):

Yeah.

Sandy Bigtree (51:23):

It all triggers other events that are going to happen. It is, it's all relational. It's a different way of relating to the world.

Holly A. Rine (51:32):

Very much so. Whereas the Doctrine of Discovery, the relationship isn't a collaborative one. It is a power relationship, which just made me think or reminded me of a quote from Theda Perdue, a scholar of Cherokee history, when she talked about where the Christians were kicked out of their Garden of Eden, the Cherokees lived in theirs. So it's like you had this garden, this relationship that is the scene of destruction for Christianity, Judeo-Christian, but for Cherokees, and we can apply this, of course, to the Haudenosaunee, she focused specifically on Cherokees, but they lived in theirs. And that same understanding of place and relationship, and it's a completely different way of looking at things, which, again, gives us that opportunity to say, "There's a different way." It doesn't have to be the exact same way, but there is a different way. History does not have to unfold in this one linear ... These are what the documents say, therefore, this is how it's going to happen.

Philip P. Arnold (52:58):

Well, that's a wonderful place to conclude our conversation today. I want to thank you, Holly, for being with us. This was really delightful. A long overdue, I would say. So thanks very much.

Holly A. Rine (53:12):

My pleasure.

Philip P. Arnold (53:13):

Yeah.

Holly A. Rine (53:13):

This was a lot of fun.

Philip P. Arnold (53:13):

Yeah, it was.

Jordan Loewen-Colón (53:16):

The producers of this podcast were Adam DJ Brett and Jordan Loewen-Colón. Our intro and outro is Social Dancing Music by Oris Edwards and Regis Cook. This podcast is funded in collaboration with the Henry Luce Foundation, Syracuse University, and Hendricks Chapel, and the Indigenous Values Initiative. If you like this episode, please check out our website and make sure to subscribe.

MUSIC (53:39):

[foreign language 00:53:39]